THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) No, Sir. The Ministry of Rural Development has no proposal at present to set up a knowledge centre in every village of the country before the 60th anniversary of Independence Day.

(b) to (d) Questions do not arise.

Rural Development Project

3681. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware about the Rural Development Project launched to provide basic access to people of rural areas as part of the poverty-reduction strategy, through construction of good quality long-standing roads with high engineering standards;

(b) if so, by when this project would be completed;

(c) whether the State Governments, through which this project is being executed, are utilising the funds released and laying the roads of the requisite standard; and

(d) whether the monitoring agencies satisfied with the progress towards completion of the project on time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) and (b) The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) seeks to provide connectivity to all Unconnected Habitations in the rural areas of the country, with a population of more than 500 persons, through good All-weather roads, by the end of the Tenth Plan period. In respect of the Hill States (North-East, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttaranchal), Desert areas and Tribal (Schedule-V) areas, the objective is to connect Habitations with a population of 250 persons and above.

(c) Yes, Sir. Road works under PMGSY are built to specifications given in the Book of Specifications for Rural Roads and the Rural Roads Manual published by the Indian Roads Congress.

(d) Though the programme goal is to connect the eligible Habitations by the end of the Tenth Plan period, the completion of the programme as per the laid down time schedule depends on annual budgetary allocations.